

(WASHINGTON) - U.S. Representative Chet Edwards has secured funding for important national defense research at Texas A&M University under the final 2010 Defense Appropriations bill, which passed the House Wednesday 395 to 34. The bill is expected to pass the Senate and be signed into law this month.

Edwards, Chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee said, *"I am very pleased that the defense bill includes my request for key defense research projects at Texas A&M. These defense projects are part of a long-term plan to enhance and strengthen Texas A&M's historic partnership with the Department of Defense. These priority programs will strengthen our nation's defense, and support jobs and economic growth in the Brazos Valley."*

Texas A&M System Chancellor Michael D. McKinney said, *"Research efforts with a national and international significance are priorities for the Texas A&M System. For our schools, that means better teachers and learning opportunities for our students. For our communities, that means more jobs and a better quality of life, and often, for our country, more security. We are pleased that our Congressman, Chet Edwards, recognizes those facts and has the dedication and experience to secure these funds for our research efforts."*

First, Congressman Edwards secured funding for important defense projects that partner Texas A&M University with Fort Hood in Killeen, the U.S. Army's largest base. Edwards secured \$2.4 million for a joint Waco VA Hospital -Ft. Hood-Texas A&M health research program that will examine the underlying causes of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Edwards created the program in 2006 and has secured \$8.3 million total for this project to date.

"The Waco VA and Ft. Hood are uniquely positioned to conduct world-class research with the Department of Defense and Texas A&M to find improved treatments and cures for veterans suffering from mental illness and post traumatic stress disorder," **said Edwards, a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee.**

Edwards also secured \$800,000 for research at Texas A&M that will develop innovative delivery methods for vaccines needed by military personnel deployed in the field.

"We have a moral obligation to do our best to protect our troops from chemical and biological weapons on the battlefield," said Edwards.

Edwards also secured \$800,000 to help Texas A&M work with the Air Force to develop a sensor and imaging technology for spacecraft to detect objects in their surroundings that may threaten U.S. intelligence operations.

"Ensuring our service men and women in combat can receive the best technology, training, and care possible is the least we can do to honor their service and sacrifice," said Edwards. "These space surveillance tools will protect American spacecraft and satellites. As more and more countries gain access to space, it is important for us to track objects that come close to our incredibly valuable spacecraft and their important missions."

Edwards secured \$1.6 million for research at Texas A&M that will help the Department of Defense improve communications technology on the battlefield. With the advent and proliferation of systems such as cell phone networks, wireless data networks, and software defined radio systems, this environment has become more complex. This research is designed to give troops every advantage on the battlefield.

Edwards supported Congressman John Carter's (R-Round Rock) effort to add \$2 million to continue a cooperative effort between Texas AgriLife Research (a research agency of the Texas A&M System) and the Integrated Training Area Management group on Ft. Hood that improves training ranges for Fort Hood soldiers.

"This project improves training grounds after they have been eroded and degraded from tank and training operations on base. This is another example of A&M working with Fort Hood to help our troops train so that they can carry out their mission successfully when they reach the battlefield," said Edwards.

"As a direct result of an appropriation carried by Representatives Chet Edwards and John Carter, our soldiers will be safer and better trained as they head overseas into harm's way," said Dr. Mark Hussey, Vice Chancellor and Dean of Agriculture at Texas A&M

"By providing strong political support for this project, Congressman Edwards again has recognized the importance of fully meeting the training needs of our soldiers while maintaining the environmental integrity of the land. We are especially pleased to provide support to those priorities identified by the leadership at Fort Hood."

"We appreciate Congressman Edwards' support of Texas A&M Engineering with these initiatives, which will build upon and expand our excellent research strengths," said Dr. G. Kemble Bennett, vice chancellor and dean of engineering and the Harold J. Haynes Dean's Chair Professor

"These projects will provide increased opportunities for interaction between federal agencies and Texas A&M faculty and students to further our nation's security and educate our next defense workforce."